



2021 REGIONAL EARLY ACTION PLANNING COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM & APPLICATION GUIDELINES

APPLICATION AND GUIDELINES RELEASE DATE:

January 11, 2021

APPLICATIONS DUE:

11:59 p.m, Friday, March 12, 2021

This document contains information regarding the Sacramento Area Council of Government's 2021 Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Competitive Grant Program. Assembly Bill 101 established the Local Government Planning Support Grants Program to provide regions and jurisdictions with one-time funding to support housing planning and accelerate housing production. Under this program, the state Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) will award funding to regional agencies through the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) program. SACOG, as the regional council of governments, is eligible for \$6,762,880 in REAP funds to address our region's unique housing priorities and planning needs.

In March 2020, the SACOG Board adopted a framework for spending the first 25-percent of funds. In June, the SACOG Board adopted a framework for the remaining 75-percent of REAP funds. This approved framework includes two grant programs: one competitive and one non-competitive. Both programs include technical assistance to participants through an accelerated "mini" Civic Lab series focused on planning and policy tools local agencies can use to support increased housing production.

The approved framework allocates a minimum of \$1,727,000 to this competitive place-based pilot grant program. This pilot program is designed to leverage the Civic Lab Housing Series and advance the Green Means Go strategy. The SACOG Board approved the funding framework specific to the REAP Competitive Grant Program on December 17, 2020. This document provides background and instructions for applying to the Competitive Grant Program.

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SECTION 1:

Program Information

A. Program Description & Goals

SACOG's guiding principle for the REAP funds is to ensure that funded activities support the implementation of the 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), which is directly linked to the Regional Housing Needs Plan. Specifically, REAP funds should be used to plan and accelerate more infill housing, expand housing product choices, affirmatively further fair housing, and better leverage future funding opportunities, such as Green Means Go.

The goals for this pilot grant program are to:

- Increase and/or accelerate housing supply and production
- Support infill housing and revitalization in Green Zones
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) through location efficient housing and/or VMT reduction strategies including walking, biking, transit, etc.
- Retain and expand community assets in Green Zones
- Provide public engagement and support equitable outcomes for low-income households and people of color

B. Eligible Applicants and Areas – Green Zones and Green Means Go

SACOG city and county member jurisdictions within the six-county SACOG region (Placer, Yolo, Yuba, Sutter, Sacramento, and El Dorado counties) with identified Green Zones are eligible for this competitive pilot planning grant program.

Planning activities must be for a specific Green Zone or Green Zones, as adopted by the [SACOG Board in December 2020](#). Green Zones are jurisdiction-nominated priority areas for development. SACOG underwent a [local nomination process to establish Green Zones](#), as a part of [Green Means Go](#), which is a multi-year pilot program to lower greenhouse gas emissions in the six-county Sacramento region by accelerating infill development, reducing vehicle trips, and electrifying remaining trips. Competitive Grant Program applicant jurisdictions must have participated in, or watched, two of the four [Civic Lab Housing Series workshops](#) held in 2020 to be eligible. Partnerships with other organizations (e.g., transit agencies, utility providers, local non-profit groups and community-based organizations) are encouraged and are reimbursable for their time through this grant.

C. Eligible Planning Activities

This pilot grant program provides funding for planning work that seeks to accelerate, increase, and/or intensify housing in Green Zones. Zoning code updates and specific plans that include an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and infrastructure needs and cost analysis are strongly encouraged because these planning activities are identified as priorities in Green Means Go. The planning activity must support the entire Green Zone or many parcels within the Green Zone. Planning activities that support a single parcel are not eligible per the REAP funding guidelines set by the state.

Funding for planning activities that are partially complete or in progress is allowed; however, the grant can only reimburse for costs incurred from January 1, 2021 or later. This may also require a contract

amendment to ensure that any provisions or obligations relating this grant are included in any existing contracts.

Eligible activities include the concepts highlighted through the Civic Lab Housing Series, including but not limited to:

- Specific plans or equivalent with an EIR
- Zoning code updates to allow by-right housing, increase density, or address development impediments such as parking, lot coverage or setback requirements
- Infrastructure planning, including for sewers, water systems, transit, roads, or other public facilities necessary to support increased housing capacity, new housing, and new residents
- Changes to fee structures that result in lower fees in the Green Zone for attached housing products

Ineligible activities:

- Preliminary engineering for infrastructure without complementary housing planning nexus
- Capital improvements
- Any planning without a direct nexus to increasing or accelerating housing
- Planning for an area outside of a Green Zone

D. Additional Requirements

All planning activities must have a strong commitment to implementation, including agreement to formally adopt the plan or related document. All activities must include a commitment to public engagement and equity. For most projects, this should include a strong public engagement component and mitigations against displacement. In some cases, SACOG will accept previously completed analysis/engagement or a commitment to conducting such analysis/engagement as a part of future planning efforts in the project area.

Awarded projects will be required to evaluate and report outcomes, potentially including but not limited to:

- New housing starts
- New housing capacity created (measured in potential units)
- New acres of underutilized or vacant land rezoned for housing
- Acres of land or potential units effected by development review process improvements (changing to by-right approvals)

E. Awards

There is no match required for this pilot planning grant. No more than one-third of the total funding will go to a single jurisdiction. The minimum total program funding amount of \$1,727,000 could increase by the time of awards. Per the adopted REAP framework, all unused funds from the other REAP programs, such as Civic Lab Housing Series and non-competitive grants will be added to the total funding for this pilot planning grant program.

Awarded projects for this program will be funded on a reimbursement basis. In most instances, this means the local agency will submit invoices to SACOG for review, processing, and forwarding to HCD.

SACOG will reimburse the local agency following approval and reimbursement from HCD. All grant funds must be fully expended by August 30, 2023.

F. Consultant Bench

As a part of the REAP framework, SACOG is establishing a bench of consultants that will be pre-qualified to do any of the eligible planning activities in the REAP Competitive Grant. If awarded grant funding, jurisdictions can choose to use a consultant from the bench to streamline local procurement processes. Should awarded applicants choose to pursue this option, the grant recipient could select a consultant firm from the bench without any additional procurement steps. Additionally, if a jurisdiction does elect to use a consultant from the pre-qualified bench, they can also choose to have SACOG administer the consultant contract and avoid the carrying costs required by the reimbursement model described above.

G. Program Schedule

The following are the key dates of the application process.

December 17, 2020	SACOG Board approved competitive grant funding framework and Green Zones
January 11, 2021	Open application period, notice of funding availability
March 12, 2021	Applications due
June 2021	Recommendations to SACOG Land Use and Natural Resources Committee
June-July 2021	Awards, with funding available after contracting
August 30, 2023	Fund expenditure deadline

H. SACOG REAP Program Coordinator and Further Information

Please direct any questions regarding the REAP Competitive Grant Program or the application process to the SACOG REAP Program Coordinator:

Jennifer Hargrove, Senior Planner
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
1415 L Street, Suite 300, Sacramento, CA 95814
E-mail: jhargrove@sacog.org

SACOG staff will provide consultation to all interested applicants regarding eligibility, deliverability and the application and selection process. Staff may also provide preliminary draft application review.

SECTION 2: Application and Selection Criteria

Section 2 below serves as the Request for Applications and directly addresses the requirements for applying for REAP Competitive Grant. Please read the instructions in this section with the background information from the Guidelines in Section 1 when considering and preparing a grant application.

Application and Deadline: The application must be submitted on [SACOG’s Screendoor Application Portal](#) and by email to the SACOG REAP Program Coordinator Jennifer Hargrove at jhargrove@sacog.org by 11:59 pm on March 12, 2021.

I. Application and Selection Process

The application consists of a project description, including some quantitative data, and four narrative questions. Planning activities that have the greatest potential for increasing housing will be the most competitive. The review committee is not yet formed. SACOG is considering a review committee of up to five reviewers, including two SACOG staff and up to three external professionals with experience in housing, planning, economic development, or other related activities. The review committee will have an opportunity to discuss all applications as a committee but will individually score each application. Based on the highest overall scores, SACOG staff and management will recommend a full project list to the SACOG Board for funding awards.

J. Selection Criteria

There are two eligibility requirements that must be met. The review committee will determine whether projects meet these criteria on a yes/no basis, no points are awarded for meeting these requirements.

Eligibility Screening	
Is the project location a Green Zone?	Yes or No
Does the project explain the strategy and/or commitment to community engagement and/or displacement mitigation?	Yes or No

There are two general evaluation criteria used by the review committee to determine funding recommendations:

How will the proposed project accelerate the construction of small lot and attached housing in Green Zones? (75 points possible)

Scoring Rubric	
The project proposal demonstrates that the proposed activities will significantly increase the amount and/or improve the likelihood of multifamily housing being built within the Green Zone(s). Highest scoring projects are both impactful in terms of the number of new units they facilitate and in terms of units per dollar requested (e.g., new units facilitated/funding ask). The project clearly results in new multifamily housing that wouldn't have otherwise occurred at the same scale.	High (51 to 75)
The project proposal will improve the amount and/or likelihood of new small lot or attached housing within the Green Zone(s) but may not be both impactful in terms of total units facilitated and in terms of units per dollar requested. It’s less clear how much the proposed activities would result in new housing that wasn’t already going to happen.	Medium (25 to 50)
The project proposal has a loose nexus to accelerating housing production within the Green Zone. It’s unclear how much the project will result in housing that would not otherwise have occurred.	Low (0 to 24)

How will the proposed project help to implement the MTP/SCS and the Green Means Go strategy to reduce vehicle miles traveled? (25 points possible)

Scoring Rubric	
The proposed project has a clear nexus to reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by both improving housing product type choice and the amount of infill housing in a lower than average VMT area. High scoring projects support more multifamily products (not just small lot/attached products) and/or are adding significant new housing to areas with lower than regional average VMT.*	High (17 to 25)
The proposed project has a nexus to reducing VMT, but on a smaller scale due to further distances from existing or projected employment and services. Medium scoring projects support more small lot/attached products, but not as much multifamily and are located in areas with lower than average or average VMT.*	Medium (8 to 16)
The proposed project could reduce VMT, but the nexus is less clear. Low scoring projects do not make meaningful efforts to improve housing product type choice and/or are not located in areas with lower than average or average VMT.*	Low (1 to 7)

*For the purposes of this application, average VMT is defined as regional average. The 2016 or 2040 regional average household VMT from the MTP/SCS can be used ([see MTP/SCS Chapter 3, page 34](#)).

K. Application Contents

All applications must contain the following elements with page limits as listed.

Max Pages	Required Application Contents	Content Description
email	Email transmission to Program Coordinator	Message stating that (name of jurisdiction) is submitting a REAP Competitive Grant application through screendoor, and who the point of contact is for the application.
The following contents must be uploaded on the Screendoor application portal: https://sacog.forms.fm/2021-regional-early-action-planning-competitive-grant-program		
1	Project Summary	Summary of grant application using provided table.
1	Project Area Information	High level description of project and the project area characteristics outlined below.
3	Narrative Questions and Answers	This narrative section is the key focus for the application. The applicant has flexibility to describe the project, its importance, and what impact it will have.
2	Green Zone and Project Area Map	Provide a map that shows adopted green zone and proposed project area. This can be provided in a single map or separately.

Project Summary (1 page)

Please fill out the contents of this table as the first element of the application. The table must fit on one page.

	Content
Project title	Official name of the project
Sponsoring Agency	Lead organization for grant application; entity that assumes all responsibility regarding management of Regional Early Action Planning grants.
Lead Person and contact information (phone, email, mailing address)	This person is the project manager and the point of contact for this application and all grant-related matters. Please be sure this contains: the person's name, title, organization, mailing address, phone number, and email address.
Partner Organization(s)	Names of other organizations officially affiliated with the grant project. A partner agency bears some responsibility in the activities of the grant.
Funds Requested	Amount of money requested from REAP Competitive Grant
Other funds	List other planning funding sources in project area (e.g., SB 2 Planning Grants, Local Early Action Planning Grants, non-competitive Regional Early Action Planning Grants)
Project Summary	For the project description, provide a one to two sentence summary of your project

Project Area Information (1 page)

Project Description. Please provide a brief project description (e.g., project objectives, anticipated policy or action, challenge this project seeks to address)

Project Area Characteristics. Answer the following questions either through jurisdiction-specific data or extracted from data SACOG provides on each Green Zone. An online tool with this information will be available on SACOG's website.

1. Number of existing housing units and employees by sector
2. Demographic makeup of the current residents in the project area (i.e., proportion low-income and people of color)
3. Current and future residential VMT in the project area
4. What resource category is the project area in using the [TCAC/HCD 2021 Opportunity Maps](#)

Project Narrative Questions and Answers (3 pages)

Please answer the following questions in 3 pages or less. We recognize that there are a variety of eligible activities and answers will vary based on the type of project proposed. Please answer all questions as best as possible.

1. How will the proposed project accelerate the construction of small lot and/or attached housing in Green Zones? If applicable, discuss any other public/private investment or planning work and how project builds/supports these efforts.
2. What is the existing residential capacity in the proposed project area *on vacant and underutilized sites*? To the extent possible, please provide a summary of the number of acres, allowed density, and realistic yield on these sites. Does the proposed project seek to change allowed uses, densities, or intensities? If so, how much new residential capacity will be created within the Green Zone (estimate)? If not, does the proposed project make realizing that development potential more likely? If so, how?
3. How will the proposed project help to implement the MTP/SCS and the Green Means Go strategy to reduce vehicle miles traveled¹? Does the project improve housing product choice through the creation of more missing middle or multifamily housing product? What are the nearest employment centers to the housing this project seeks to facilitate? Does the project help to encourage shorter vehicle trips, transit, biking, or walking?
4. How will the project engage the community about the proposed policy changes? Will the project help to reduce or mitigate against displacement? Does the project affirmatively further fair housing²?

¹ See [Chapter 4 of the 2020 MTP/SCS](#) for reference.

² Affirmatively furthering fair housing (AFFH) is enshrined in California State law by AB 686 and applies directly to activities related to housing and community development undertaken by all local, regional, and state governments. It means taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics. Specifically, affirmatively furthering fair housing means taking meaningful actions that, taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws.